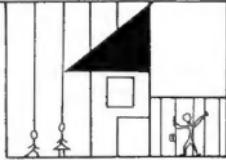


NEWARK JUSTICE PROGRAM

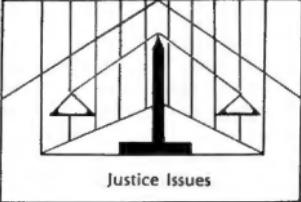
NEWSLETTER



Family Stabilization



Prisons and Family Life



Justice Issues

JANUARY, 1981

Volume 20, Number 1

Parole Board Meets With The Community

Over 100 community people, criminal justice professionals and family members of inmates attended the American Friends Service Committee-Justice the Helping Hand meeting hosting members of the New Jersey Parole Board on December 4th at the Newark House. Christopher Dietz, Leroy Jones and William Reed, members of the present board, fielded questions from

the audience concerning the new legislation and its effect on an inmates standing in regards to the parole process.

The two hour meeting covered a variety of areas on parole including the implications of the new guidelines in obtaining release, the use of juvenile records in determining eligibility, the need for the community to

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F.S.P. Extends Services To Union County

While many of our Justice-The Helping Hand members are from Union County, the Family Stabilization Project has handled a limited number of casework clients from this area. As of January 1st, we are proud to announce that we will formally begin working with the social service staff at Union County Jail in a fashion similar to our Family Stabilization work in the Essex County Jail system.

In order to inform people about our new services, we plan on distributing flyers to inmates in the jail about the project. We will also conduct a wider based publicizing campaign through press releases and community air spots on local radio stations.

Services which will be made available to Union County families and inmates, are crises intervention, assistance with social services, transportation, emergency referrals, counselling



Parole board member Christopher Dietz addresses interested group at meeting held at Newark House.

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Parole Board

(Continued from Page 1)

become involved in securing the necessary resources to assure successful assimilation of the inmate back into the community, and the steps an inmate and the inmates family can take to facilitate parole.

Christopher Dietz, chairman of the parole board, also spoke on the importance of involving the community in similar discussions in all areas of criminal justice. Mr. Dietz stated that he felt meetings of this kind give all participating parties a good perspective on the way the process works. He also added that the only way to run a successful program that is responsible to the inmates, their families and the affected community is by bringing the people together to discuss and evaluate the existing process.

Wray Baily, director of the American Friends Service Committee-Newark Justice Program termed the meeting a great success.

"I have accepted the challenge to call for meetings such as this so that it may give me a greater opportunity to help correct some of the recent unrest in our criminal justice system, today. I hope that all the people that have worked with me in the past will help me

make this legislation understandable to those who are in desperate need of its proper implementation. If I or my staff can be of assistance in any way, it would be our greatest pleasure to respond."

The American Friends Service Committee intends to print and distribute the questions asked of the board and their responses in booklet form which will be made available to the community as soon as preparation is complete.



JTHH President Marianne Gibson introduces JTHH Officers and Parole Board members.

From Sydney Harris' column of August 25, 1980, (San Francisco) a definition "designed" to annoy everybody:

"A judge is an official who sentences a stranger he has never seen before to a prison the judge has never visited, on the basis of a law the judge did not make, under the absurd pretext that this stranger's long and close association with other law breakers will somehow return him to society a better man."



Christopher Dietz explains the new parole legislation to families, JTHH members, and professionals.

The Death Penalty— A Resurging Issue

With the resurgence of discussion and proposed legislation on the death penalty, staff felt that AFSC's 1976 statement is still very timely and well worth reprinting.

The American Friends Service Committee reaffirms its opposition to the death penalty. We base our stand on the Quaker belief that every person has value in the eyes of God and on Quaker testimonies against the taking of human life.

The U.S. Supreme Court decisions of July, 1976, rejected the major constitutional arguments against the death penalty, which had stopped executions in the U.S.A. in the previous decade. These decisions denied that execution is cruel and unusual punishment, citing the passage of death penalty laws by a majority of the states in recent years as evidence that the public does not consider execution to be cruel and unusual. In our view, alleged public support for capital punishment does not diminish the cruelty nor warrant the taking of human life.

The Supreme Court agrees that there is no conclusive evidence that the death penalty acts as a deterrent to crime. It recognized that the continuing demand for capital punishment is in part a manifestation of a desire for retribution. We find it particularly shocking that the Supreme Court would give credence to retribution as a basis for law.

Punishment by death is inflicted most often upon the poor, and particularly upon racial

(Cont. Page 5, Col. 1)

Essex County**Family Stabilization
Project Casework**

It is 4 p.m. and once again the doorbell rings. I peer through the glass and look into the troubled faces of a young man and a middle aged woman. I welcome them into the Newark Justice Program office where they nervously sat down. The young man spoke first. "My daddy he's in jail. We don't know where he's at for sure."

I begin my series of questions hoping to piece together past events and more importantly, to lessen John and Mary's fears. After talking for awhile and making several phone calls, I learned Mr. E., John's father, had been incarcerated in Essex County Jail in Newark. His bail had been reduced from \$500.00 to \$100.00 as the charge was a minor offense and a victimless crime. However Mr. E., like many people, could not afford \$100.00 alone. Since Mr. E. is a member of JTHH, a community organization composed of families and friends of inmates, and since we felt that this was a crisis which warranted immediate attention, we decided to put our community Bail Bond Fund to work. Working in conjunction with the family, we had the same concerns in mind: "Get your daddy out of jail so he can come back home".

As family members are required to contribute one third of the bail money, John placed \$33.00 in my hand and began to smile. After obtaining the remaining \$67.00 from our Bail Bond Fund, John, Mary and

(Cont. Page 4, Col. 3)



**WHILE THERE IS A LOWER
CLASS I AM IN IT, WHILE
THERE IS A CRIMINAL ELEM-
ENT I AM OF IT, WHILE
THERE IS A SOUL IN
PRISON I AM NOT FREE.**

EUGENE DEBS

Eugene Debs ran for President on the socialist Party ticket in 1920. He received 1 million votes, campaigning from his cell in the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary where he was imprisoned for opposing World War I.

**DEPARTMENT
OF
ASSORTED
MISCELLANEOUS**

Please don't forget to let us know if you're moving . . . a postal card with your new address is enough to keep the Newsletter coming in. You folks in prison, this is especially important for you because many prison administrators don't have the time to correct addresses for the post office.

The Newsletter is published by the American Friends Service Committee and is sent free to anyone who asks for it. If you want to add friends to our list, send names and address and zip codes to the AFSC Newark Justice Program, 40 Walnut St., Newark, N.J. 07102.

It costs us something like \$3 per person per year to provide the Newsletter. Contributions to help cover the cost are in very good taste, much appreciated and tax-deductible.

If you don't want to know what we've got to say for ourselves, please ask to get OFF the mailing list.

* * *

We still have copies of our two pamphlets: "A Visitors Guide to New Jersey Prisons" and "Community Services Guide for Ex-Offenders in Newark, N.J." Please send your request along with 50 cents to cover mailing costs.

NEWARK JUSTICE PROGRAM

JANUARY

Union County**Family Stabilization
Project Casework**

Recently the A.F.S.C. Newark Justice Program has extended its efforts on the behalf of inmates and their families to areas beyond Newark and Essex County. In August 1980, for example, a resident of Elizabeth, New Jersey was arrested and placed in Union County Jail under charges of kidnapping with a bail of \$25,000.

Although the charges were eventually dropped on insufficient grounds, the shock to the defendant's family at his arrest was incalculable. The defendant's mother immediately contacted the Newark Justice Program and sought help in obtaining a fair hearing for her son.

A.F.S.C. staff and volunteers provided emotional support to the inmate and his family, as-

sisted the Public Defender's office in obtaining testimony concerning the circumstances surrounding the arrest, and helped the defendant obtain a \$5,000 bail reduction.

According to the family, the assistance of the Newark Justice Program was invaluable, and may have prevented the long-term incarceration of the defendant. "Without the help of A.F.S.C.," said the mother, "I don't know what would have happened to my son."

The criminal justice system in New Jersey can present bewildering obstacles to the defense of an individual suddenly and unexpectedly charged. By informing defendants of their rights and alternatives, and by providing many other types of counsel and support, the A.F.S.C. Newark Justice Program continues to work towards the humanization of the criminal justice system.

**Essex County
Casework**

(Continued from Page 3)

myself posted bail at the East Orange police station. After notifying Essex County Jail, Mr. E. was released.

One hour later, the tired but relieved face of a man appeared behind the glass window. "It's my daddy" says John. Mr. E. smiled and shut the metal door. He looked at his family and spoke softly: "It's okay we're going home now".

I looked at Mr. E. and his relieved family and realized the importance of a stable and secure family. We stood for a moment, then, Mr. E. glanced in back of him as if tossing a bad dream behind and said simply, "Thank you".

Julie Rossero

CALENDAR**JANUARY 8**

JTHH meeting 6:30 p.m. Simple supper 6:00 p.m., AFSC office.

JANUARY 15

Martin Luther King's Birthday.

JANUARY 21

Bail Bond Committee meeting 5:30 p.m., AFSC office.

JANUARY 21

Program Committee meeting 6:30 p.m. Simple supper 5:30 p.m., AFSC office.

FEBRUARY 5

JTHH meeting 6:30 p.m. Simple supper 6:00 p.m., AFSC office.

FEBRUARY 18

Bail Bond Committee meeting 5:30 p.m., AFSC office.

FEBRUARY 18

Program Committee meeting 6:30 p.m. Simple supper 5:30 p.m., AFSC office.

Death Penalty

(Continued from Page 2)

minorities, who do not have the means to defend themselves that are available to wealthier offenders. A minority person convicted of a capital offense is much more likely to pay the extreme penalty than a white person convicted of the same crime. Discretion as to whether to execute continues under the Supreme Court's guidelines, and minority persons will continue to be victims of this discretion. The Supreme Court in its 1976 decision ignores this reality.

The grossly disproportionate number of nonwhites sentenced to be executed and the continuing demand for the death penalty indicate that the death penalty may constitute an outlet for unacknowledged racist attitudes. This outlet is now legally sanctioned, but it is none the less morally unacceptable.

The death penalty is especially abhorrent because it assumes an infallibility in the process of determining guilt. Persons later found to have been innocent have been executed. This will happen again when killing by the state begins anew.

It is bad enough that murder or other capital crimes are committed in the first place and our sympathies lie most strongly with the victims. But the death penalty restores no victim to life and only compounds the wrong committed in the first place.

We affirm that there is no justification for taking the life of any man or woman for any reason.



F.S.P. Extends Service

(Continued from Page 1)

and any other interventions needed to stabilize families of inmates incarcerated at Union County Jail.

In our Family Stabilization work in Essex we've handled work and family release requests, finding foster care situations for children of incarcerated women, assisting families in obtaining welfare, food stamps, emergency clothing and housing. We have a broad based Resource Bank for Essex County and will now begin one for Union County.

The staff and students here greatly look forward to working with the Union County Jail social service staff and Union County social services.

*Congratulations and
Best Wishes to*

**Almeta McKie
and
Earl Bailey**

on their marriage on
November 29, 1980

from
Newark Justice Program Staff

NEWARK JUSTICE PROGRAM

JANUARY



Best Wishes for 1981
from
Newark Justice Program Staff,
Volunteers
and
JTHH Officers

NEWARK JUSTICE PROGRAM

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